

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MARCH 28, 1860.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. SLIDELL made the following

REPORT.

[To accompany Bill S. 317.]

The Committee on Foreign Relations, to whom was referred the memorial of Isaac E. Morse, praying additional compensation as special commissioner to New Granada, have had the same under consideration, and report:

The memorialist was appointed by the government as special commissioner to New Granada, and entered upon the discharge of his duties on the 7th of November, 1856.

He appears to have returned to the United States on the 28th of April, 1857, and to have made a final settlement of his account on the 20th of June, 1857, but the Department of State refused to allow him any compensation beyond the rate of salary allowed a minister resident for the time of his service. His salary having been computed at that rate, he was paid the sum of \$3,572 84.

Not conceiving that this afforded him a fair compensation for an important and special service, the memorialist appealed to the Secretary of State, and presented the following letter from the Hon. William Marcy, the Secretary of State, at whose solicitation he had consented to accept the mission:

“BALLSTON SPA, June 27.

“SIR: I have received a letter from the Hon. Isaac E. Morse, the late commissioner to New Granada, in relation to his compensation.

“It was understood that his expenses were to be allowed, together with a fair *per diem* compensation, but the precise rate was not, I think, agreed on.

“It was regarded as a highly responsible and difficult mission; and I thought he might justly claim as liberal a sum as had been paid in any similar case. I had in my mind the allowance made at the *department* to Mr. Schenck and Mr. Pendleton, which was, I think, about \$20 a day.

“As there had been no particular appropriation for the mission, I expected Mr. Morse would be paid out of the contingent fund for for-

eign intercourse. This was the usual, if not the universal, mode of payment in such cases.

“Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

“W. L. MARCY.

“Hon. LEWIS CASS, *Secretary of State.*”

Although the committee by no means adopt the precedent which Mr. Marcy appears to have had in his mind, they yet deem the duties performed by the memorialist of a most important character, and the mode of compensation in effect to have been fixed by the Secretary of State at the time the service was undertaken.

The committee, therefore, recommend that the memorialist receive a compensation for his services at the rate *per diem* of a minister resident, and that there be added thereto his traveling expenses at the rate of \$15 *per diem* during the entire term of his mission.

There seems, however, to have been some difference of opinion between the Department of State and the memorialist as to the precise date when the mission terminated.

The memorialist arrived in New Orleans, on his return from New Granada, on the 28th April, 1857, and the department closed his compensation account as of that date.

It seems, however, that upon the memorialist's arrival in New Orleans, he found his family too unwell to permit his leaving them. He therefore telegraphed that fact to the Department of State, with a request that he might be allowed to remain a day or two in New Orleans, on account of his own health and that of his family, in reply to which he was authorized by the Secretary of State to “take his [your] time to come” to Washington.

Allowing, therefore, for this delay on leave, as well as for the time occupied in traveling to and from Washington, the date of the 1st June, 1857, should be properly fixed for the termination of his mission.

In view of all these circumstances, as well as of the importance of the services rendered, the committee recommend that the memorialist, Isaac E. Morse, be allowed at the rate of \$7,500 per annum during the term of his special mission as commissioner to New Granada, and that he be allowed at the rate of \$15 *per diem* for his traveling expenses during the entire term of his services as special commissioner, as aforesaid.

The committee report a bill in accordance with the foregoing opinions.